CITY OF UNKNOW DEAD.

The Potter's Field of New York—One Hundred and Fifty Bodies in One Grave.

In 1868 the commissioners of charties and correction found it necessary to find a burial-place for the poor, and so the large plot on the east side of Hart's island, up the sound some twenty miles or more from the city, was secured. During the war the island had been used as a camping-ground for union soldiers, and also as a place of imprisonment for rebel soldiers, and the first burial of the dead there were union soldiers. A neat little union cemetery where sleep hundreds of those who where enlisted in the cause of the union now graces the island, and a beautiful soldiers' monument and scores of lesser marble tombstones mark the resting-places of those who died while encamped on the island.

Since 1868 something over 41,000 of the city's poor, friendless, and unknown dead have been buried in the city cemetery, which adjoins that in which are buried the remains of the soldiers. On Mondays and Thursdays of each week the burials take place. When a person dies in a hospital, workhouse, penitentiary or other public institution, unless the body is claimed by friends or charitable-disposed persons and given Christian burial, it is placed in a cheap 50-cent pine coffin, removed to the morgue for a day or so, and thence transferred on one of the city's steamers to Hart's island and buried by a gang of workhouse employes who are detailed to bury the dead. When a person dies in a public institution, his or her nearest friends or relatives are informed, and if the latter are able the city will take measures to compel them to bury the body. But the duty is often shirked. It is nothing new to hear of a husband who is able refusing to bury a wife, or of a wife refusing to bury a husband, or of a father or mother refusing to give a son or daughter a proper burial, or of the latter doing as much for their parents. But there are those who, even if as poor as the mythical church mouse, will even beg for the means to secure a coffin an a burial-plot elsewhere for some deceased loved one. Some of the poorest of the poor have been known to deny themselves the very necessaries of life, to go thinly clad and hungry, rather than one of their kith and kin should be placed in a pauper grave. And yet there are in potter's field hundreds of the dead whose kindred are known to be well-to-do. There sleep in some of the pits side by side the poorest outcast and the once petted child of fortune. "I would sell the dress off my back rather than that my son should be buried in the pauper-field," said a poor tenement-house woman at one of the hospitals yesterday. Said another: "I'd scrub the flesh off my bones before I'd not give me poor husband a Christian burial." There are many, yea, thousands, who think it a sin and a disgrace to allow their kindred to be buried at the expense of the city in a potter's field. Yet there are those whose hearts are hardened, and who do not change even when the cold earth shuts out from their sight forever some loved one. The other day an educated German, a young man of good family, died in a hospital. His relatives were informed, but they paid no attention to the matter, and his wife, who had money, refused to bury her husband. Certainly the burial which the dead receive in the potter's field is not a Christian one. No tears are shed there; there are neither mourners, priests, nor prayers. No tender hands lift the coffin; no tender hands place the shroud upon the occupant. A gang of twenty men, more or less, is engaged six days in the week digging the pits in which the dead are to be buried. One hundred and fifty bodies are placed in each pit, and the coffins are packed as closly together as sardines in a box.

The burial gang also consists of workhouse employes detailed from the branch workhouse on Ward's island, which is in charge of Warden Dunphy. As an extra inducement the burial gang is allowed rations of tobacco and poor whisky. The duty which they perform is not a pleasant one, and many would shirk it if they could. As the reporter watched the gang at work a day or two ago, a decrepit, bloated-faced member of it while lifting a coffin remarked:

"I guess some of you will have to lay me in one of these holes before long, boys."

"I hope to God I'll never have to be buried like a dog in this place." said another. Yet every once in a while some unfortunate—dragged down by rum or poverty or sickness—finds his last resting-place near the spot where he labored in the burial of others of his kind. The men go about their work at the pits as carelessly as if they were handling logs. Sometimes the coffins are broken, and part of a human body may be seen exposed, and laughs and jibes are heard as it is dashed into the hole. Then again human blood trails over a coffin. The stench that issues from some of the coffins at times, especially in the summer, is terrible. Boxes instead of coffins are at times placed in the pits. They contain the remains of the dead from the hospital dissecting-rooms. Many bodies are huddled together in pieces in one box. The pits are numbered by sections and tiers, and a record is kept of the names of those buried there, while the unknow are marked "unknown." There is a part of the cemetery set apart where bodies are temporarily placed so as to await the possibility of being claimed by friends.

Less than thirty years ago there was not a human habitation or even a house on Hart's island. Now it has a population of one thousand. The branch lunatic asylum, and Hart's island hospital are there, and Warden Dunphy and Dr. Andrew Egan, superintendent of the Branch insane asylum and hospital, have homes there. Many improvements are going on on the island, among others the erection of a new pavilion for the insane, to accommodate one hundred souls. There are five hundred female insane patients at present confined in six pavillions. A large plot of ground, now filled by water, is to be filled in. Some of the buildings now occupied as a hospital were erected during the war and occupied as soldiers' barracks, and in one or two rebel prisoners were confined. A spot where the branch workhouse stables now stand is pointed out to visitors as the place where Yankee Sullivan fought his famous fight with "Dublin Tricks." The steamboat Minnehannock makes six trips a week to the island, and usually carries a lot of visitors. It is a delightful excursion—to some.—*New York Times.*

Something Better.

A Watermelon and a Cucumber which found themselves on the same stand at the Central Market yesterday began quarreling:

"You are all colic, to say the best of you," remarked the Melon.

"And you are all seeds and rinds!" retorted the Cucumber.

"That's all right, coming from a little fellow like you."

"Little! what's your size, when the man has had to plug you to see if you are ripe? I'd rather be a ripe Cucumber than an over grown green Watermelon!"

"Come, now, what's all this row about!" queried the stand-keeper, as he finished selling a quart of strawberries.

"Why, answered the Melon. "old Cholera Morbus here is jealous of me."

"No such thing! Old Rind and Seeds prides himself on being able to kill two men to my one, and you know that is all wind!"

"Hush, my children," whispered the stand-keeper. "While I appreciate both of you for all you're worth, neither of you is justified in doing any bragging at this season of the year. The Harvest Apple is now knocking 'em out in one round."—*Detroit Free Press.*

Depends upon Locality.

"What makes a popular girl?" queries an exchange. A variety of gifts may contribute to this desideratum, responds the Chicago *Inter Ocean.* In New York, the girl must have money; in Boston, use a "which" with "ness" attached; in Philadelphia, chew gum; in Louisville, give pointers on the winning horse; in Kansas City, adjure ice cream; in Cincinnati, stand the thermometer at 115 in the shade; in Chicago, have beauty and brains.

It is estimated that Nebraska has planted and has growing 500,000,000 forest trees. This is good for twenty-five years' work

The Lake Dwellers.

Many years ago the people of Europe were obliged to build their houses and villages in the middle of lakes and ponds, or in some place surrounded by water. In this way they protected themselves against wild beasts that infested the woods around them, and from the savage men who were more cruel than the wild beasts.

It is probable that at this time England, France and Germany were nearly covered with forests, through which monstrous animals wandered. Great bears, wolves, and possibly the immense mammoth, drove men and women before them. They took refuge in the lakes and ponds of water; they built their towns on piles or stakes driven into the bottom of the lake.

All over Europe the remains of these singular retreats are found, but the most remarkable are in Switzerland. Here, where the waters of the lake are low, great numbers of these villages may be traced. The piles on which they were built are still there; sometimes even remains of the houses are found. The people who lived in them were of small size, apparently. They used stone axes or hatchets, and fought with arrows pointed with flint. It is no wonder that they fled from the wild beasts of the forests.

These lacustrine villages, as they are called, cannot have been very comfortable. The piles or stakes on which they rested were cut in the woods near by, and then dragged to the water side, where they were driven into the deep mud and fastened together. A floor of logs was laid upon them. It seems to have been covered over with brushwood, leaves and grass. The houses were built above, probably wooden huts, scarcely sheltered from the wind and rain.

The people who lived in them knew how to weave a coarse linen or woolen cloth, but usually must have been clothed in skins. Rude ornaments of different kinds—rings, chains of copper or bronze, weapons, stone knives, hammers of stone, beads—are found. Fire was evidently used, and the bones of the ox, hog and goats are proofs that the lacustrine people were not vegetarians. But it is easy to imagine how uncomfortable were their dwellings. The floor of brushwood must always have been damp and unhealthy; the chill winds of the Swiss and German lakes pierced through the huts; sometimes floods overwhelmed them; sometimes a stealthy enemy broke into their defenses and burned the whole village as if it were a nest of venomous insects. The ashes of many of these towns are found at the bottom of the lakes, showing that they were destroyed by fire. They were usually joined to the shore by a bridge of stakes, over which an enemy could pass.

Many of these towns are found in the lakes and ponds of Ireland and Scotland. Here they are called "crannoges." They seem to have been less carefully built than those of Switzerland, but they still show that the people who planned them must have labored hard to provide themselves with a safe home. They had canoes hollowed from trunks of trees, on which they carried their piles out into the lake. They cut down oak trees of considerable size with their hatchets of stone or bronze. In one "crannoge" recently discovered in Scotland more than 3,000 trees, some of great size, had been cut down and used in building one of these villages in the midst of a lake.

We who live in safe and pleasant cities or country homes can scarcely believe that people could exist in these wild retreats in the midst of the waters. Yet it seems that they were inhabited by a large population, even in Scotland. Here men, women and children lived and died, sometimes perhaps as happily as if they had lived in New York or Boston. They caught fish from their house doors; the children swam in the waters; they sometimes cultivated grain on the land, and sometimes lived, like squirrels, on the nuts of the forest.

Men have not, even yet, given up these lake dwellings. The savages in South America, Africa, New Guinea and Borneo still build them, but they are said to be not so skillful as were the builders on the Swiss lakes.—*Eugene Lawrence, in Harper's Young People.*

Science and Invention.

In some of the public hospitals Japanese paper handkerchiefs are now used, with much satisfaction for drying wounds.

A cable car having a succession of large and small wheels inside the car over which the cable passes, thus dispensing with the grip and much of the cable wear, has been invented by a San Franciscan.

A new method of dressing wounds, by which their healing is said to be hastened, and the pain made to disappear at once consists in the application of compresses wet with a decoction of thirty parts of valerian root in 1,000 parts water.

Jules Garnier has designed an elevated railway for the City of Paris, which is to be completed in time for the exposition of 1889. It will be about eighteen miles long and will cost $10,000,000. The structure will be composed of two tracks, one above the other, on an iron frame. The trains will be composed of three American cars each.

Prof. Brewer, of New Haven, has reported the results of a number of experiments on the results of soaking green wood of various kinds in cold water, and thus removing the albuminoid matters. That green lumber contains something which greatly favors its decay, and which may be removed by long continued soaking in water, was well known many years ago, and gave rise to the process of water seasoning, in which the planks were sunk in large bodies of water and kept immersed for six months to a year, when they were raised, piled in the air and thoroughly dried. Flooring lumber thus treated is little liable to decay, for the simple reason that it contains little or nothing that is fit for the food of the micro organisms that cause decay.

Minnis Haden, a worthy colored blacksmith of Montgomery, Va., has lately invented a piece of very simple machinery by which the striking hammer is easily and effectively worked by his foot, while he has both hands free to hold his iron and use the small hammer. To a listener the blows come as naturally and as rapidly as if there were two men handling the hammers in the old-fashioned way, but there is a difference. The machine, by an easy motion of the foot on the treadle, strikes a harder blow than any man can strike, and can be made, at will, to strike as light a blow as may be needed. But the use of this simple and cheap device in the blacksmith's shop is not half. It can be just as easily used, and will find a large field of usefulness, in driving a drill for blasting rock.

Home Suggestions.

Chloride of lime should be used with care. A young lady recently put a large quantity in a clothes press where there was a musty smell. The bad odor was entirely destroyed by the chemical, but a silk dress, of a pale blue color, was bleached to a dirty gray hue, and rendered almost useless.

Mould can be prevented from forming on fruit and jellies by pouring a little melted paraffine over the top. When cool it will harden to a solid cake, which can be easily moved when the jelly is used.

Orange, lemons and similar acid fruits should always be put up in glass, as the acid in them readily attacks tin plate.

For relief of intense itching the *Lancet* recommends sponging the parts once or twice a day with pure rectfied spirits, containing one per cent of carbolic acid.

In making pickles never use vessels of brass, copper or tin, as the action of the acid on such metals often results in poisoning the pickle. Either a porcelain or granite iron kettle is the best for such purposes.

The grated rind and the juice of an orange add much to the flavor of ginger cake.

The French method of administering castor oil to children is to pour the oil into a pan over a moderate fire, break an egg into it and stir up. When it is done flavor with a little salt or sugar or current jelly.

A trader at Greensborough, N. C., advertises for "a boy who does not play base-ball and is willing to work for good wages."